

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon)."

The Rev. Fred. G. Lee, now D.D., formerly D.C.L. (of Salamanca, we believe), writes and publishes an "expostulation" to the President of the Royal Academy on the subject of "Immodesty in Art." He cites three anonymous correspondents of his own, and he adds his own opinion that sacred subjects are neglected, and those which he dislikes are favoured. He attributes this to "the dogmatism of naturalistic philosophers, the decay of religion, the introduction of foreign morals and alien tastes," and other like causes, respecting which he may at least be credited with some knowledge about one—the decay of religion. One has only to compare the Salon with the Academy, however, to see the enormous difference in spirit between French and English art.

Beneath M. Renan's sarcasm on the genesis of religions there lies a foundation of truth. In his *Studies in Religious History* (recently translated into English*) he writes:—

"'You Europeans,' an Oriental once remarked, 'never fully understand religions, because you have never beheld the birth of any. As for us, we daily see some fresh one rising in our midst.' Why then, asks M. Renan, has not some millionaire the imagination to apply the experimental method to religion? The movements of the Mahdi show how much might be done, and a man with two millions sterling, say, to spend could revolutionise the religions of Asia. . . . Everywhere, and in all ages, man has felt the need of bowing before an Ideal Superior, and in every religion that has gained any permanent hold over the human heart the Ideal has depended for that hold upon the elements of goodness in it. This is what M. Renan shows with convincing clearness, and it is this which gives to all his studies—whether of Buddhism or of mediæval saints—so deeply religious a tendency. Essentially all religions are the same; the differences are only accidents of time and circumstance. Christian missionaries spend their lives in converting the heathen, while scholars spend that heathenism is, after all, rudimentary Christianity. Sceptics waste their ingenuity in disproving this legend or the other, but a sounder criticism contents itself with the more important fact that such legends were in fact believed. Did St. Francis really receive the stigmata? Did St. Catherine indeed contract a mystical union with Christ, 'her most sweet, most dear, most tender spouse'? Perhaps not, but how infinitely uninteresting these discussions are compared to the indisputable fact that such legends sprang from the popular conscience and took possession of the popular heart!"†

This is to get at the core and kernel of the matter. We, who are even now witnessing the new-birth of a new religion in the Higher Spiritualism, are in danger of concerning ourselves only with the husk—the mere phenomena—of running about to discuss these, and to make vain attempts to convert the world to our own views, while all

the time we are missing the true significance of what has far other blessings for the world, if we will only heed them.

If the subjoined (taken from the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*) be true we shall soon lose a prolific genius. His life has been worn away by over-strain and almost criminal want of care of his health. No man, however strong, could do what he, always weak, tried to do. As to Spiritualism, that is no new thing to him, except, perhaps, in its external form. He was always a Spiritualist in the best sense of the term. Such geniuses always are. It is sad to think of so valuable a life cut short.

"Thomas A. Edison is not likely to ever return from Florida. He had a severe attack of pleurisy last December, and it left his lungs hopelessly diseased. His recovery is deemed impossible. His health was never robust, and now he is helpless. . . . Edison has lately become a believer in Spiritualism, and has devoted considerable time and thought to the use of his phonograph, or talking-machine, to communicate with the dead."

Mr. Alfred R. Wallace is now in Washington, U.S.A., talking apparently that common-sense about Spiritualism which our shrewd Transatlantic friends will appreciate. A correspondent of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, who has interviewed him, asked for some specific declaration of his belief in communications between the worlds of spirit and matter. He replied: "There is no doubt of it, and any one who will pursue the investigation can come to no other conclusion." That is robust, and it embodies Mr. Wallace's faith. I would with all my heart that all the world could share it, and could hold it with the tenacity which has always characterised him. But I cannot refuse to see that the general statement so strongly made must admit of considerable modification before it can be accepted as precisely accurate: the law (if it be a law) has, like most laws, many exceptions. I believe wholly in the reality which Mr. Wallace affirms: and I look with hope to the advent of the day when all men will be able to attain the position which I think he has a little antedated. "Many of the so-called frauds," he added, "are not frauds in the sense in which people usually look at them." I wholly acquiesce in that opinion.

The following reflections of the Editor-in-Chief of the *Popular Science News* are of value. The phenomena narrated by Pliny are striking, like those which occurred in the house of the Rev. Dr. Eliakim Phelps. The writer's concluding paragraph shows that American men of science are as apt as are ours to refuse credence to evidence that they are unable to fit in with their own knowledge and experience.

"It is indeed remarkable that the phenomena connected with haunted houses have been uniformly the same in every country, among all people, in every age, of which we have any information. If they are the result of collusion or trick, an important fact is brought to view, that the inventive faculty of the mischievous and idle classes of all the ages has run in the same grooves, and produced like results. In modern haunted houses, it is true, we have the persistent ringing of bells, even after the communicating wires are removed, and also we have music produced by unseen hands, on instruments of modern forms; but the whistling and rapping noises, the thumping

* Bentleys. 1886.

† From a notice of the book in the *Pall Mall Gazette*.

sounds of violent winds, the slamming of doors, the moving about of articles of furniture and other unfixd objects, the appearance of white, luminous bodies and apparitions in human form, have been the stock phenomena witnessed in haunted houses in ancient and modern times. It would seem reasonable that modern science, with its manifold capabilities for producing cunning and mysterious tricks, should have aided in diversifying the performances (if they are but tricks); but such has not been the case. The old, old phenomena continue, with but slight variations.

"The haunted house at Athens which is described by Pliny, affords phenomena strikingly like what occurred at the house of Dr. Phelps, of Stratford, Conn., thirty-five years ago, and yet the occurrences are separated by a period of 1,800 years. The house at Athens was so full of strange noises and unaccountable disturbances that the inmates fled from it in terror; and it remained unoccupied, Pliny informs us, for a long time. The owner was glad to find a purchaser in Athenodorus, a philosopher, at a very low price. But the philosopher and his family were not allowed to remain in quiet; strange noises, as that of the clanging of chains, were heard one night; and, springing from his bed, an apparition in human form appeared, and beckoned him to follow. He did so, and was led to a certain spot of ground near to the house, where the ghost vanished. The public authorities of Athens ordered the place to be examined; and, upon digging into the earth, a skeleton in fetters was discovered. It was removed and buried, and the house was no longer haunted.

"In considering alleged instances of ghostly interferences, the easiest and not unusual way to dispose of them is to promptly reject all the assertions, all the statements of witnesses, and charge everything to 'trick and illusion'; two old pack-horses which stand ready saddled and bridled at the doors of many men of popular scientific repute. These serviceable beasts have proved very convenient, and are much used by many clever clergymen and students in science who are asked by the unlearned and perplexed masses to explain some occult phenomena by no means uncommon in modern times."

Mrs. Hardinge-Britten has been busy at Keighley, where she has delivered a lecture on Spiritualism, the proceeds of which were given to the Cottage Hospital. Mrs. Britten spoke with her accustomed eloquence, and was frequently and loudly applauded. She was especially effective in demonstrating the identity of the modern phenomena of Spiritualism with some of those recorded in the Bible, and in showing that Spiritualism, so far from being opposed to the Bible, and condemned therein, is in perfect accord in this respect with the spirit of the Old Testament records, and with the pure and unadulterated teaching of Christ. She was subsequently replied to by one Rev. Thomas Ashcroft, a Nonconformist minister of Chorley. His remarks were less intelligent than is usual with such speakers. Among other things he is reported as saying that "tables magnetised by the sitters retained their magnetism for some seven years." Let us hope he was misreported.

Mr. Ashcroft proceeded to disavow charges which he has publicly stated to have made against all Spiritualists of "fraud and deception." I am glad to note that. He gave them "credit for sincerity." But there is an unfortunate habit rife now of regarding every fresh record of phenomena that are inexplicable by recognised laws of nature, from the side of presumable fraud first of all. The fact is overlooked that these phenomena, thus again and again reported by independent observers, are not in themselves different; on the contrary, there is between them all a strong family likeness, and they hang together and must be discussed and criticised as a group and not as isolated facts. I presume Spiritualism and its facts meet now the same treatment that new and unfamiliar facts, not obviously growing out of antecedent and familiar knowledge, always have met with. The inherent conservatism of the human mind has never been properly recognised yet.

Mr. Ashcroft, it appears, has raised an avenging spirit in the shape of Mr. E. W. Wallis, who replies to him in a long address delivered in the Bradford Mechanics' Institute, which would have gained considerably by condensation, and by a more general and cautious presentation of evidence. Mr.

Wallis, however, has little difficulty in demolishing his opponent's criticism, and even in convicting him of some sharp practice in quoting Mr. Barkas as an opponent of Spiritualism, and alleging that Mr. Howitt had recanted his belief in Spiritualism before his death. Mr. Wallis publishes a letter from Mr. Alaric A. Watts, Mr. Howitt's son-in-law, denying this calumny, which was made some three years since in the first instance. Mr. Wallis now states that Mr. Ashcroft "has again put it on his bills that Wm. Howitt condemned Spiritualism." If this be so, and no denial or explanation is given, Mr. Ashcroft is guilty of a graver offence than that which I have characterised as sharp practice. But a man who allows himself to be run away with, as Mr. Ashcroft evidently has done, by a bigoted and angry spirit of partisanship is not worth powder and shot unless it be in a court of law.

*The Social Drift Magazine** appears in a new and more convenient form. The current number reproduces in full what it calls "a notable review" of the Rev. Page Hopps's *Spiritualism in the Old Testament Illustrated by the Book of Ezekiel*, which appeared in these "Notes by the Way." Among the contributors I recognise the name of Lyman C. Howe, who writes an article on "The Bearings of Liberalism," containing much thought that is generous, tolerant, and broad in conception. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good," is the motto of the magazine. An excellent principle on which to act in these days. It professes a devotion to "the proper study of mankind—man—and a free, untrammelled discussion of all matters pertaining thereto, in a spirit of liberty to all, but of unseemly license to none." I should be glad to find the magazine circulating in London. Modern thought concerns itself largely with the subjects dealt with in its pages.

The following paragraph, quoted from the *Daily News*, recalls to mind the signs and portents which, according to Plutarch and Shakespeare, heralded the death of Julius Caesar:—

† "In the most high and palmy state of Rome
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

"There is one within
Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch;
A lioness hath whelped in the streets;
And graves have yawned and yielded up their dead;
Pierce, fiery warriors fight upon the clouds,
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol.
The noise of battle hurred in the air;
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan,
And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets."‡

"Our Vienna correspondent§ telegraphs: In Vidovec, a Hungarian village near Warasdin, the belief of an approaching war has seized hold of the entire population. A splendid Fata Morgana was observed during three consecutive days on the wide plains around the village. Enormous divisions of infantry, with scarlet caps, could be distinctly seen moving in the plains and performing exercises to the words of command of a colossal chief, whose sword was seen flashing in the air. The phenomenon lasted several hours, and finally the soldiers disappeared in mid-air. The people stood awestruck in great crowds, and observed every movement of the phantom soldiers with breathless attention. Two gendarmes afterwards went in the direction of the scene of action to see if any traces could be found, but, of course, in vain. The phenomenon is believed to have been a reflection of some infantry divisions manœuvring at some miles distance."

By-the-way, Shakespeare's notion of the department of ghosts in the public streets is worse than Mr. C. C. Massey's ghosts perambulating the Strand, which caused in Mr. Paice symptoms of horrid fright in anticipation. What would my friends say to a "shrieking, squeaking, squealing, gibbering ghost," I wonder?

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† *Hamlet*, Act I., Sc. 1. ‡ *Julius Caesar*, Act II., Sc. 2.
§ *Daily News*, March 17th.

PARLEYINGS WITH CERTAIN PEOPLE OF IMPORTANCE IN OUR DAY.*

To wit: MR. ROBERT BROWNING—PROFESSOR HUXLEY.

(Continued from page 101.)

"Next to undue precipitation in anticipating the results of pending investigations," says Professor Huxley—in an article in the *Nineteenth Century* for February, entitled "Scientific and Pseudo-Scientific Realism"—"the intellectual bias which is commonest and most hurtful to those who devote themselves to the increase of knowledge is the omission to profit by the experience of their predecessors. We follow," he continues, "the evil example set us in pouring scorn upon the work of our immediate spiritual forefathers. To say nothing of a little modesty, a little impartial pondering over personal experience might suggest a doubt as to the adequacy of this short and easy method of dealing with a large chapter of the human mind. Even an acquaintance with popular literature might raise a doubt whether, after all, these men who, take them all round, were endowed with wisdom and folly in much the same proportion as ourselves, were likely to display nothing better than the qualities of idiots." Professor Huxley further assures his readers—an assurance, perhaps, not wholly needless—that "modern science takes into account all the phenomena of the universe which are brought to our notice by observation or experiment. It admits," he continues, "that there are two worlds to be considered—the one physical, the other psychical—and that there is a most intimate relation and interconnection between the two, and that their phenomena run not in one series but along two parallel lines," and he adds that "comprehension is more than half-way to sympathy even here."

Most of our readers, we think, on perusing these passages from the Professor's article, may have been led to infer that the "psychical world," in which he avows his belief, is the world in which is centred the interest of the Spiritualist; that "the spiritual forefathers," whose claim to be something beyond "idiots" he is so handsomely vindicating, must be the distinguished men who, during the last thirty years, have been held up to public ridicule as such by pseudo-scientific writers, because they have dared to avow their conviction, derived "from observation and experiment," of the truths of Spiritualism. The words we have quoted fit them literally and absolutely; but it is, we are sorry to say, not to them that they are applied. "*Ars longa vita brevis.*" Science is slow though life be short. It is to the Schoolmen of three centuries ago that Science to-day, through the mouth of its great High Priest, renders a tardy justice! The pioneers of Spiritualism must await their turn. The alchemists, with whose *primum mobile*, we gather from Professor Huxley's article, science has no irreconcilable quarrel, may perhaps, be expected to come next. Even judicial astrology may be within a measureable distance of recognition by accredited science. Our "spiritual forefathers" must wait. Nevertheless, some crumbs of comfort Professor Huxley's recent utterances may seem to be capable of affording to Spiritualism, and at the hands of Science it has had to accustom itself to receive with contentment very small mercies indeed. In that respect we share the lot of theology, a far more ancient and, therefore, respectable "science" than ours. Its vindication, indeed, at the hands of accredited science does not seem impossible, and it may reasonably precede ours. At present it seems to suffer at the hands of Professor

Huxley very much the same species of handling from which he so liberally vindicates its representatives of 300 years since.

Passing from the Schoolmen, the Professor proceeds to the more immediate object of his article, which is the scarification of a clergyman for using the word "law" as if it denoted "a thing, as if a law of nature, as science understands it, were a being"—(a being and a thing are not usually regarded as synonymous by unscientific persons)—"endowed with certain powers in virtue of which the phenomena expressed by that law are brought about."

This grievous perversion of the canons of scientific terminology Professor Huxley thinks is much more serious in a sermon than in a scientific treatise, which to unscientific persons will seem curious, until they come to the Professor's candid admission of the possibility that he may have been guilty of it himself. In a scientific personage addressing men of science such a casual deviation from accuracy of definition is as is the choleric word in the mouth of the captain; in a parson's sermon—addressed to folks, the majority of them, it is greatly to be feared, unscientific—it is "rank blasphemy." This is perplexing, as it were the voice of Mr. Gladstone speaking telepathically through the organs of speech of Professor Huxley! But in this controversy between Science and Theology, far be it from us to intervene. We come, therefore, to the following passage in which we are "bracketed equal" with Holy Writ itself, an "honour" to which we can advance no pretensions whatsoever.

"There are two classes of people," continues the Professor, "who have appropriated the forms of science without knowing anything of its substance: those who are ready to believe in any miracle so long as it is guaranteed by ecclesiastical authority, and those who are ready to believe in any miracle so long as it has some different guarantee. Those who accept the miraculous narratives which they are taught to think are essential elements of religious doctrine are in one category; the spirit-rappers, table-turners, and all the other devotees of the occult sciences of our day are in the other. Both agree to ascribe to science a dictum that is not scientific. It is asserted, for example, that on a particular occasion water was turned into wine, and, on the other hand, that a man or woman levitated to the ceiling, floated about there, and finally sailed out of window. And it is assumed that the pardonable scepticism with which most scientific men receive these statements is due to the fact that they feel themselves justified in denying the possibility of any such metamorphosis or any such levitation, because such events are contrary to the laws of nature."

After assuring his readers that science makes no such pretensions, the Professor continues:—

"As to the particular cases adduced we are so perfectly fair-minded as to be willing to help your case as far as we can. You are quite mistaken in supposing that anybody acquainted with the possibilities of physical science will undertake categorically to deny that water may be turned into wine. Many very competent judges are already inclined to think that the bodies which we have hitherto called elementary are really composite arrangements of the particles of an uniform primitive matter. Theoretically, we have no sort of objection to your miracle. And our reply to the levitators is the same. Why should not your friend levitate? Fish are said to rise and sink by altering the volume of an internal air receptacle; and there may be many ways science as yet knows nothing of by which we, who live at the bottom of an ocean of air, may do the same thing. We have not the presumption to deny the possibility of anything you affirm—only, as our brethren are particular about evidence, do give us as much to go upon as may save us from being roared down by their inextinguishable laughter."

What amount of evidence would save an advocate for the belief in Spiritualism from being roared down by the inextinguishable laughter of Professor Huxley's scientific and pseudo-scientific brethren can only be very vaguely conjectured. Science has been roaring with ridicule of

* *Parleyings with certain People of Importance in their Day.* By Robert Browning. Smith, Elder and Co.

Scientific and Pseudo-Scientific Realism. By Professor Huxley—*The Nineteenth Century.* Kegan Paul, Trench and Co.

Spiritualism for many years, and that which is "inextinguishable" it may scarcely presume upon the hope of extinguishing.

The accumulated evidence of the "observation and experiments" of thirty years of men, some of whom, at all events, can scarcely be described as "idiots," has made no very visible impression even upon the candid and courageous mind of Professor Huxley himself. But some impression we cannot help thinking has been made. It is now some years since the Professor, with his usual frankness, almost Bismarckian, proclaimed that "Spiritualism did not interest him." We doubt whether he could honestly—and otherwise than honestly we are well assured he would not—make that affirmation now. Our reason for this doubt is that he has of late appeared to derive satisfaction to himself from talking about it; and those who have accustomed themselves to watch the phenomena of human nature will have remarked that folks, however wise and prudent, rarely talk of things that are wholly out of the sphere of their interests.

Telepathy, Esoteric Buddhism, spirit-rapping, table-turning, and the levitations of Mr. Home and Mrs. Guppy, have lately occupied a place—we cannot venture to say "the place of honour"—in the more recent utterances, and, may we not also venture to hope, the casual meditations of Professor Huxley. We think that, as nurses say of their charges, "he is beginning to take notice." He tells us in his present article that "comprehension is more than half-way to sympathy." We should be inclined to say that notice is more than half-way to interest; that interest is more than half-way to sympathy; and that sympathy is the whole way to comprehension. Further developments may, we think, be anticipated in this direction.

MIRACLES.

To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle,
Every square yard of the surface of the earth is spread with
the same.

To me the sea is a continual miracle—
The fishes that swim—the rocks—the motion of the waves—
the ships with men in them.
What stranger miracles are there?

WALT WHITMAN.

THE MISSION OF SCIENCE.

"Nothing is more evident to-day than that the men of facts are afraid of a large number of important facts. All the spiritual facts, of which there are plenty in every age, are denounced as superstition. The best attested spirit stories are not well received by that scientific courtesy, which takes off its grave hat to a new beetle or a fresh vegetable alkaloid. Large-wigged science behaves worse to our ancestors than to our vermin. Evidence on spiritual subjects is regarded as an impertinence by the learned; so timorous are they, and so morbidly fearful of ghosts. If they were not afraid, they would investigate; but Nature is to them a churchyard, in which they must whistle their dry tunes to keep up their courage. They should come to Swedenborg, who has made ghosts themselves into a science. As the matter stands, we are bold to say that there is no class that so little follows its own rules of experiment and induction, or has so little respect for facts, as the hard-headed scientific men. They are attentive enough to a class of facts that nobody values—to beetles, spiders, and fossils—but to those dear facts that common men and women, in all time and place, have found full of interest, wonder, or importance, they show them a deaf ear, and a callous heart. Science, in this respect, neglects its mission, which is to give us a transcript of the world, and primarily of that in the world which is nearest and dearest to the soul."—*Life of Swedenborg*, by J. J. Garth Wilkinson, p. 258.

HOW I INVESTIGATED SPIRITUALISM, AND WHAT I MADE OF IT.

By J. H. M.

PART IV.

The *Lefroy* incident related in the last chapter set me seriously thinking. In entering on this investigation I had contemplated either demonstrating the truth of psychical phenomena, or exposing the folly of those who maintained its reality. Being ignorant of the true facts, I confess at the outset I had a very hazy conception of the problem I expected to demonstrate or expose. This *Lefroy* experience came as a surprise, and was something beyond a psychical or physical phenomenon. I had not calculated on encountering mental or moral revolutionary problems. No sane person would contend, in this case, that the offensive communicating intelligence, and the subject matter of his communication, had emanated from the mind of any of the sitters. Even the name of *Mapleton*, when given at request, at the time, recalled nothing to either of us. In matter, manner, and method the messages received were stamped with the individuality of an independent outside intelligence. Whether the influence communicating was in reality that of the spirit it purported to be or not, could scarcely lessen the importance of the mystery revealed in the manner of communication, while the matter of the messages opened up suggestive possibilities of spirit existence differing radically from inherited popular conceptions of the future state.

Should I proceed, or abandon further research? A personal embodiment of evil in a devil, with a hell of brimstone and fire as the future residence for the great bulk of humanity, I had left far in the rear, remembered only as Bluebeard, and similar nightmares of childhood. No theological convictions deterred me from proceeding. Whether I wished it or not, I reflected, in this case I was obliged occasionally to put up with the company of the debased and the degraded. Was there of necessity any fundamental difference between holding converse with a bad spirit this side the veil, and with one but recently passed over to the other? I had dispensed with the "demon" of mythology, and knew nothing, and could conceive of nothing, worse than a really bad man, unless it were a bad woman. I should not hesitate, I reflected, to converse with a murderer on earth, were it desirable, and plainly my duty so to do. Why should the mere fact of the passage of death render communication more objectionable or dangerous? Does death necessarily fix the destiny, or alter the conditions and character of the moral *Ego*, any more than the sleep of a night's rest? It might be that popular conceptions on this subject were only popular fallacies. Should the inquiry disclose a future existence at variance with preconceived notions held respecting it, so much the worse, I argued, for our popular ideas, and the sooner they were corrected the better. After all, was not my object in this investigation to determine for myself if the phenomenon of Spiritualism yielded evidence of a future life? Satisfactorily to establish the independent existence, even of a bad spirit, must surely for this purpose prove as conclusive, perhaps more, as that of the most exalted intelligence of the seventh heaven.

The outcome of my cogitations—with the recital of which I trust I have not wearied the reader,—resulted in sitting the next evening for the purpose of following up, and, if possible, obtaining information and explanation from our untoward visitor. The circle again comprised my wife, daughter Jane, John, and myself. Immediately on sitting down a spirit came to the table, and in response to request for name, spelt out clearly *Lefroy*. Had he any communication to make? *No*. We requested him to go away; which he did. The intelligence calling herself *Margaret Fortesque* then manifested her presence, and we

put questions expressive of our indignation and distrust arising from the circumstance of the visit of *Lefroy*. She requested John to take writing materials, and said she would give her replies through his hand. Her response was as follows :—

"I am very, very sorry we introduced Mapleton to you last night. We all thought he was really getting better, but when he began to communicate he was unable to withstand the temptation to deceive you. We will do our best to prevent his coming again. If you order him to go, he must obey you, as he is bound to tell you the truth if you order him.

"Don't let Mr. M——r join the circle; he presses on the table and impedes communication.

"MARGARET FORTESQUE."

All written replies were signed either in full or with the initials of the spirit purporting to write. The above communication appeared to me to make matters rather worse, and more inexplicable than ever.

Supposing the spirit to have accurately conveyed in the expression used the meaning she intended, it implied responsibility on the part of our communicating friends for the introduction of *Lefroy*. The observation at the close of the message, if somewhat personal and abrupt, was charmingly outspoken and direct. Accepting the hint, I removed my hands from the table, remaining in the room and taking notes of all that transpired. At the previous day's séance we had somewhat hastily broken up on receiving the name of the disturber, and at the time we had remarked on the apparent wish of our visitor to continue communication. It now occurred to me to inquire if the manifest anxiety displayed for further conversation arose from desire on the part of *Mapleton* to make a statement respecting the crime for which he suffered. In reply, we were informed: "He made a written confession before he was executed.—Maggie Fortesque." For my own part, I had heard nothing of any written confession, nor had any of the sitters, and we simply recorded the statement, not believing a word of it. I have since learnt, however, on reliable, but not on official, authority, that a lengthy written account of the details of the crime was committed to paper by *Lefroy* shortly before his execution, and is now in the possession of the Home Office. Statements to this effect may, for aught I know, have been published at the time in the newspapers, but if so, they did not come under my observation, nor that of the other sitters. The communication in the above message was the first intimation to us of the fact of a written confession.

In order to attempt further elucidation of the difficulties revealed by this *Lefroy* incident, I inquired of the intelligence: "How did he learn the name of my wife's sister?" and the answer came, "He got it from your minds.—Maggie Fortesque." This reply led to many other kindred inquiries, resulting in a number of communications tending to show that bad spirits are always trying to read the thoughts (sometimes successfully), and that good spirits, although able to do so, never take any information whatever from the brain. I put a further question pertinent to the subject. The reply, although decidedly irrelevant, was highly suggestive of an independent intelligence: "Go into the smaller room.—Fortesque."

On receiving this intimation we shifted our quarters from the dining-room to the library. Our old friend, *Matthew Jenkins*, then came, and I at once opened fire at him touching *Lefroy*. "What did he advise us to do in the event of Mapleton troubling us?" "Order him to go away and not return," was the reply. I pressed Jenkins on this difficulty of personating spirits. He replied: "We will take care they never do so again.—M. J." My father then came to the table and received his share of our, now, somewhat modified indignation. A number of questions were put to him, but I cannot say I thought his replies made the matter much clearer. He wrote: "Mapleton only per-

sonated the spirits and they spoke through him—J.M.H." Again: "They could not quite guide him but only partially so.—J.H.M." I also attacked my father on the subject of the expression used by *Maggie Fortesque* in her apology. Would he explain how it came to pass that a bad spirit was introduced by other and better intelligences? He wrote in reply: "Not bad spirits; but we may introduce spirits in a transient state, for their good and your instruction.—J.H.M."

To pursue the matter further appeared fruitless. I left it at this. But we were never again troubled with this unpleasant visitor.

(To be continued.)

THE MEDIUMSHIP OF CHARLES FOSTER.

In the *Brooklyn Magazine* (February), Mrs. F. G. de Fontaine gives an interesting account of a séance she had with Charles Foster. She had gone with a friend, and they had considerable difficulty in finding the medium's house. They were, one may therefore presume, strangers to him. Raps came at once, and Foster declared that the room was filled with spirit-presences. The details of the séance had better be given in the words of the narrator:—

"Can you give me the names of any persons present?" was asked.

"Certainly," was his quick reply, and immediately taking up the pencil, he wrote the names of several who had been on the most intimate terms with my friend in years gone by; among others the name of his mother. The medium laid the pencil down, and, leaning back in his chair, steadily gazed at his *vis à vis* for some time, and upon being asked the cause, said, "I am looking at your mother; she stands behind your chair, leaning lovingly and confidently on your shoulder, and gazing on your face with the old love, which you must recall."

"When and where did she die?" was then asked.

The answer named the place, day, and month of her death. Having his scepticism thoroughly aroused by this time the questioner asked for her maiden name.

Without hesitation Foster took the pencil and wrote in the familiar handwriting of the lady in question her full name, where she was born and when; also, the name of her son, his age, and place of birth.

These startling developments had the effect of partially unbinging the feelings of the questioner; but not willing to yield his faith even to such evidence, he resolved to test the powers of the medium in such a manner as would leave no room for doubt. Having travelled extensively, making acquaintances in foreign countries, many of whom were dead, he determined to apply a significant and most difficult test. As if his thoughts were instantly divined by the medium, he remarked, "There are spirits here whose manners are in strange contrast with those of our community, and they are making strange motions which I cannot interpret."

My friend then made a mental inquiry concerning a friend who had died in the East Indies. The answer came immediately, "Your friend who died in the East Indies is here," and he proceeded to describe minutely the personal appearance of one who had been dead six years.

"I would know her name," said the excited questioner. Foster instantly seized a pencil and wrote upon a piece of paper which he handed him, with a perplexed air, saying, "Here are some characters, sir, but I must confess that I do not understand them."

It was the name of the dear friend, in clear, beautiful Persian characters, with the salutation, *Burrah Sahib, Salaam*, the name by which she called my friend, literally meaning, in the Oriental exuberance of politeness, Great sir, good cheer.

While regarding the inscription with silent wonder, the medium suddenly drew up his coat sleeve with the exclamation, "See here!" and there in red lines on the fleshy part of the arm, standing out in bold relief, were the English initials of the lady's name. Not to be deceived, my friend caught the hand and held it for a few moments, during which time the phenomenon faded from sight.

Nonplussed not merely by the captivation of two of his senses, seeing and hearing, but by receiving a message in a language which not ten persons in the country could read or understand, and of which the medium had not the slightest knowledge, it was decided that only one more test remained. A secret involving the character of a third party was known only to the dead lady and my friend, who immediately resolved to penetrate this mystery if possible. He propounded the question, and requested that she would write the answer in her own hand through the medium. As before, he seized the pencil, and carelessly and rapidly wrote the secret out, without knowing a word of the same. It was true in every particular.

OFFICE OF "LIGHT,"
16, CRAVEN STREET,
CHARING CROSS, W.C.

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

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Light :

Edited by "M.A. (OXON.);" and E. DAWSON ROGERS.

SATURDAY, MARCH 26th, 1887.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editors. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable.

THE INVESTIGATION OF RARE PHENOMENA.

No. V.

We have reached a period when it does not seem to us desirable to devote more space to a barren controversy. We were bound to point out what appeared to us to be faulty in methods of handling adopted in these days by some critics of our facts. We have been forced to dissent from the claim put forward that conjuring affords any reasonable explanation of the phenomena which it is sought to cover in that way. Mr. Myers has drawn attention (p. 115) to the allegation that a professional conjurer of the name of Kellar now professes to be able to "duplicate any performance given by mediums after he has seen it done three times," and says that he is puzzled to find this professional conjurer cited on October 16th, 1886, as a witness that the phenomena are not the result of trickery or sleight of hand. But has Mr. Kellar ever withdrawn his direct testimony, given immediately after witnessing the phenomena to the reality of which he testified? If so we are unaware of it. What is now stated shows only that the effect has faded from his mind, as is often the case; no allegation such as is now made can invalidate direct testimony. We should need, moreover, to see what Mr. Kellar can do before we were willing to accept such a very sweeping assertion as that referred to by Mr. Myers. It is said, we believe, that Mr. Kellar was startled by the sudden presentation of a perfectly new phenomenon, and that he gave his testimony rashly. We are not sure about that. Which is the true Kellar? Conjurers are not rash as a rule; and the first testimony was direct and plain. It is more likely (to adopt a line of suggestion familiar to Mr. Myers, and used effectively by him) that Mr. Kellar finds now that he can simulate by trick what he knew very well was no trick when he first saw it. We repeat that does not invalidate his first direct testimony. We appeal from "Philip drunk to Philip sober." We must see, and see repeatedly, as we have done with mediums, what Messrs. Kellar and Davey can really do before we attach any special importance to what they do unquestionably say. And if we found, as we do not expect to find, that they can apparently duplicate by trick what we have witnessed over and over again where no trick was conceivable, no imputation of fraud for a moment to be thought of, we shall feel it our duty to warn our readers that there is a certain amount of base coin in circulation, not to withdraw our confidence in the genuine coin of the realm.

There is indeed no royal road to knowledge in these occult and obscure phenomena. There is no alternative to patient and laborious search if we would find. The minutest verbal criticism fails of its purpose. It is a mere trifling with the husk, and will never reach the kernel. These phenomena have been before the world now for near half a century. They have occurred in the presence of men, women, and children. (Are the children expert conjurers too?) They are all generically alike; so that it is difficult for one medium to sit long with another without bringing away some special manifestation of spirit-power, which was not his before; some curious rap; some manifesting spirit who never came before: some special spirit-light, something which it is wholly out of the question to say that he imitates, having discovered his brother's trick. In many cases it is a spirit who speaks to the circle through his entranced body, which, even to the uninstructed and prejudiced mind, is more likely: that all mediumship is trickery, conjuring, and fraud, and that the very babes and sucklings in these later days are accomplished jugglers: that honourable men and women, earnest and zealous, meet regularly for the purpose of taking one another in:—this, or that what is so widely testified to by men of honour, whose word is sufficient in all else to carry with it instant acceptance, is *true*?

It does not seem to us that there is any doubt as to the answer to be returned to this question. We feel that to ask it is to provide the answer. And we have a lingering sense of a certain humiliation in having spent so much space in discussing a matter that hardly admits of discussion, unless the disputants have a common platform on which to stand. And this we say rather with regard to the manner of criticism than in reference to criticism *per se*. We are so far from desiring that any facts propounded by us should be accepted without criticism that we desire nothing better than that our critics should go and do as we have done—spend laborious years in patient investigation, and then come out with their facts. That is the only method worthy to be called thorough: the only means of arriving at truth. And, as we have elsewhere pointed out, it is the method adopted by some of our severest critics in their investigations which have recently seen the light in those most serviceable and valuable volumes, *Phantasms of the Living*.

SLEEP IN DEATH.

I would not Death were Sleep! So might I dream
And dwell in endless forms of Phantasy;
The Past, in strange confusion rise to me,
And evil things gone by, awake and seem.
Give me to be, in Death, what thing I may
Fairly in Life have made myself to be;—
I would stand face to face with it, and see
And live and learn with it another day.
Or rather, oh my God, take Thou the best
My Life has made; and make of it a man:
Give me to better it another span
Of thine Eternity;—and leave the rest.
I yield it up to burn, if so Thou wilt,
Its hopes—its fears; its glories and its guilt.

A. A. W.

We have received communications from several quarters animadverting on the employment of an antiquated and obsolete Act of Parliament against such persons as "Neptune," in whose defence Mr. C. C. Massey so generously came forward. Some correspondents suggest a petition to Parliament; but that course would not be successful, we fear. These relics of a by-gone age of intolerance must be left to die out of themselves under an enlightened and wise growth of public opinion. Every case in which an obsolete statute is unjustly or unduly pressed is one step towards its abrogation. The pressure on our limited space compels us to condense in this way letters which we should otherwise have been glad to publish.

EVERY man has three characters—that which he exhibits, that which he has, and that which he thinks he has.

MR. EGLINTON'S SEANCES AT ST. PETERSBURG.

Translated from the "Rebus" of March 18th, 1887.

Having received a kind invitation from Mr. Eglinton to assist at a psychographic séance, we assembled in his rooms at three o'clock on the 26th of February. We were four:—Miss Pribitkoff, my husband, Mr. Sabouroff, who had never as yet been at any séance; my niece, Miss Bestougeff, and I.

We brought our own slates, at Mr. Eglinton's request, and each of us had in our pockets a question written on a sheet of paper, carefully folded so as to make it impossible to be read without being opened.

We sat near an ordinary card-table, forming a semi-circle, in the following order: Mr. Eglinton, I, my husband, Miss Pribitkoff, and my niece. We all joined our hands. Mr. Eglinton's right hand remained free to hold the slates.

At Mr. Eglinton's request I marked with a knife a small piece of slate-pencil, the facets of which were quite new, and put it on a slate, which Mr. Eglinton immediately placed under the table. I then asked aloud in English, "Is there anybody present except us?" In answer to this we soon heard the distinct noise of the pencil writing on the slate, and three raps announced that the communication had been finished. When the slate was withdrawn we saw the name of "Ernest" written in the well-known firm handwriting of Mr. Eglinton's guide, and I recognised the same bit of pencil I had marked, which had been worn by being used.

After this we each had an answer to our questions, which were put on the slate. As I was the nearest to the medium I was the first to get a message in answer to a few words written in Russian to my child. The slate was put under the cover of the table, and we soon heard the writing and the three raps. Then we read the following communication in English: "Your son is here, but he cannot write. We will speak to you later on."

Then I put under the same slate another Russian question, written upon a folded piece of paper: "Is anybody here for my husband?" The slate remained on the surface of the table this time, but nothing was heard, only Mr. Eglinton seemed to be suffering and breathing heavily. In a few seconds writing was heard, and the following was found to have been written: "There is no one here for your husband; our object is to convince him of our power."

After this, Mr. Eglinton proposed to try a very interesting experiment by putting four bits of pencil of different colours on a slate, after we had each thought of a different number; and this was promptly done.

Miss Pribitkoff then received a message in answer to her complex question, which she had written upon paper in English the day before, and which she put between two clean slates. This was her question:—

"Is it true that not all the spirits who give communications can do so themselves, and consequently give the messages through another spirit? Do they lose their individuality by it? And who are the spirits that write in Russian at Mr. Eglinton's psychographic séances?"

A long silence followed, and no writing was heard. Mr. Eglinton then asked me to touch the slates with him. After a while the writing was quickly done, and we not only all heard it, but I could feel the pencil move between the slates. The communication correctly answered the question, and it was written in a curious manner. It began, as usual, at the top of the slate, but ended on the opposite side of it, as if some one had been writing it while standing opposite to Mr. Eglinton. Here is the message in English (written partly in the ordinary way and partly upside down):—

"The spirits dictating the messages necessarily lose some of their individuality. There are one or two spirits understanding Russian who have the power

"*There are one or two spirits understanding Russian who have the power*"

The writing was that of Ernest; while the message to my husband was in quite a different hand.

My niece, Miss Bestougeff, had also a communication in answer to her question, but I think it too personal for publication.

As each of us had received a message, we thought the séance finished, but Mr. Eglinton, though seemingly exhausted, put two clean slates together, saying they would perhaps now speak

to me as had been promised. At last we all heard, and I felt, the writing begin, for the slates, with my consent, were put on my left shoulder by Mr. Eglinton, and in less than a minute a charming message of twenty-nine lines, in the firm handwriting of Ernest, gave me great joy by its contents, which are, however, of too private a character to be published.

While the writing was going on, Mr. Eglinton twice took his hand away from mine, and the writing instantly ceased. The same happened once when my niece took her hand away from Miss Pribitkoff's, and the communication was immediately interrupted. All this was very convincing and persuasive for my husband, who was no great believer in spirit manifestations.

This most interesting séance was concluded by an experiment with a banknote, which I had hurriedly and without looking at it put between a two-fold slate which Mr. Sabouroff locked, keeping the key. The number was instantaneously written down, and corresponded with that of the banknote.

Mr. Eglinton looked very tired and complained of a heaviness in the head. This seems to be quite explainable after the hard work his organism is obviously undergoing at the moment when physical manifestations are produced.

Signed:—

MARIE SABOUROFF,
NICOLAS SABOUROFF
(Counsellor of State),
BARBARA PRIBITKOFF,
SOPHIE BESTOUGEFF.

No. 4, Nicolaiefskaya, St. Petersburg,
February 26th, 1887.

[We have just received, as we go to press, a long communication which we shall publish in next week's "LIGHT" from a correspondent in St. Petersburg, who gives an interesting history of the growth of Spiritualism in Russia to the present time, and promises that this letter shall be followed by another containing a narrative of Mr. Eglinton's present work in the Russian Capital. Our correspondent speaks of the "sensation" caused by Mr. Eglinton's séances as "indescribable."—EDS. "LIGHT."]

We beg respectfully to draw attention to Notices to Contributors and Correspondents, which we trust may relieve us of pressure on space, which has become very serious.

We have to thank the *Social Drift Magazine* for a kindly notice, and for advertisement of "LIGHT." We are grateful for the approbation our efforts meet with in the United States, and hope to find that we shall gain readers among thoughtful Spiritualists there and elsewhere. Our contemporary says: "'LIGHT,' London, Eng., strikes out on a new volume with a change of staff, and with a tone and vim which, as we Yankees say, evidently means business. Those wishing to subscribe for a foreign journal devoted to the Harmonial Philosophy would do well to call at this office and look over some of the late numbers."

THE *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* (March 15th) records a good case of faith-healing at Lincoln. Richard Green, son of Charles Green, of Ripon-street, Lincoln, suffered from an attack of paralysis, and from epileptic fits. He was unable to move except by the aid of crutches. He has lately attended faith-healing meetings at Nottingham, where he resides at 54, King's Meadow-road. "The effect upon him is such as would scarcely be believed, were it not that his friends and those who knew him have ocular demonstration that he has been wonderfully and mysteriously cured. . . . He is full of life and spirit and walks about as if nothing had ever been amiss with him."

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE, WINCHESTER HALL, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—On Sunday last Miss Young delivered an excellent trance address to an attentive audience, the hall being crowded to excess. We are meeting with much success. On Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. May Mozart will give an inspirational address. W. E. Long, 9, Pasley-road, Walworth.

LONDON OCCULT LODGE AND ASSOCIATION FOR SPIRITUAL INQUIRY, REGENT HOTEL, 31, MARYLEBONE-ROAD.—On Sunday morning next at 11, Mr. Price will hold a meeting for Mesmeric Healing; and in the evening at seven, Mr. Tindall will give the first of two lectures on "The History of English Spiritualism," in the course of which he will reply to Mr. Hodgson's attack at Whitechapel. As some of the readers of "LIGHT" may desire to obtain the *Spiritual Reformer* (noticed by "M.A. (Oxon.)" in last issue), I may inform them that Mr. Tindall, 30 Wyndham-street, W., will send copies post free for 24d. each.—F. W. Read, Secretary, 79, Upper Gloucester-place, N.W.

ONE Supreme Providence governs the world; and genii participate with him in its administration. To these genii have been given among different people, different names, and different honour.—PLUTARCH.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[It is desirable that letters to the Editor should be signed by the writers. In any case name and address must be confidentially given. It is essential that letters should not occupy more than half a column of space, as a rule. Letters extending over more than a column are likely to be delayed. In exceptional cases correspondents are urgently requested to be as brief as is consistent with clearness.]

Phantasms of the Living and the Telepathic Theory.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—The two important volumes lately published by the Society for Psychical Research, under the title of *Phantasms of the Living*, contain a most valuable contribution to psychical research. The cases given, although very numerous, have been selected with great care, and their authenticity is guaranteed by the most exhaustive scrutiny; and the number and importance of the cases must for a long time afford a mine of wealth for the reference of the student of experimental psychology. Moreover, the tone of the whole book is sound and judicious, and the editors show themselves to be men, not only of high culture, but of matured discrimination.

All this and much more could be said regarding the importance of these volumes, which must sooner or later produce a powerful impression on the Agnostic school of thought; not because we have in these volumes any facts in advance of those many of us have long been familiar with, but because the facts are presented in a form and with a care calculated to arrest the attention of the thoughtfully sceptical mind, and because they are, as I have said, substantiated by an amount of testimony which must be submitted to because it cannot be gainsaid.

Having said this much regarding the facts presented to us, I am yet compelled, on the other hand, to express my belief that the telepathic theory which is submitted as a key to the interpretation of the facts can be, without difficulty, shown to be altogether insufficient.

Mr. Gurney, in the *Spectator*, defends the adoption of a distinctive word, on the ground that "a generic term is urgently needed." But, if so, then the Society which professes to be guided by the most rigid rules in the selection of its facts should not have adopted a "generic term" with less critical accuracy than that exercised in the selection of its facts, and I would say that the term telepathy is ambiguous and misleading, and that it entirely breaks down in its application; that, as a key, it can open only a few psychical locks, the wards of which in the vast majority of cases bar its application.

Telepathy is defined as "The ability of one mind to impress or be impressed by another mind otherwise than through the recognised channel of the senses."

Now this phrase seems to me to be ambiguous, inasmuch as it is capable of two opposite readings. It may read *Otherwise* than through the recognised channels of the senses; or it may read, *Otherwise* than through the recognised channels of the senses. The first reading would signify, *otherwise* than through the senses, that is, through the psyche. But the second reading would signify that telepathy acts by the senses but through channels not yet recognised. This second reading would seem to be the one intended by the editors, for in these two volumes no definite recognition is made of soul; and we cannot, therefore, but infer that telepathy is used in a physical sense.

It is true that the editors disclaim any interpretation or definition of the term, but if it does not imply a something physical, why is it used in place, let us say, of telepsychic or telenoetic?

In "LIGHT," Vol. V., in criticising the term "telepathic," I show that the brain is incased in nine different coverings, and that any vibrations arising within the brain must be refracted, distorted, and dissipated in passing through these various media of different densities; and still further distorted and dissipated in passing into the second brain through its nine protective coverings.

Now, although the editors decline to recognise *brain waves* as the instrument employed by the brain or mind in "thought-transference," yet if the term telepathy has a physical significance there can be no other channel than vibrations by which it can act physically; but if the term does not imply physical action, it then seems to me not to have been selected with that extreme critical exactitude which in other matters is the characteristic of the editors.

However, to pass from verbal criticism to the facts before us, it seems to me that the telepathic theory, if it applies to thought-transference experiments, entirely breaks down when applied to

the explanation of "phantasms" even of the undoubtedly living.

We find that in those very interesting and important experiments which have been the most original work of the Society for Psychical Research, the thoughts, assisted by the eyes of the "agent," on being transferred to the "recipient," are depicted in an almost invariably irregular, inaccurate, and distorted manner. Now this is exactly what we might expect if the telepathic theory be accepted as an explanation of the transference of those refracted and distorted vibrations, if any there be, which escape through the skulls of the agents and enter the skulls of the recipients; but the phantasms of the living, or of the dreaming, or of the dead, which enter our chambers, are appalling in their rigid truthfulness to the life. Now, be it noted that in cases of experimental telepathy the thoughts of the agents are transmitted only two or three feet, generally; while the telepathically transmitted phantasms of the living, or those at the moment of death, have travelled sometimes five or ten thousand miles. It is thus evident to my mind that if the instrument used in experimental thought-transference be telepathic, this cannot be the instrument used in the transmission of phantasms of the distant dead and dying. For, as I have said, in the first series of experiments the portraits are absurd caricatures, while in the revelations by phantoms the portraits are appalling in their awful reality.

It may be replied that the agonistic action of the soul or brain at the moment of death would act with an intensity far beyond that of the mind in experimental thought-transference, but if it were so, the intensity would exert itself, if it did not exhaust itself, in transmitting *ideas* of love or anxiety, and would leave behind all traces of peculiarities, as regards the cut of the beard or the colour and fashion of the clothes. But if the phantoms were identities they would carry with them their identities in every detail and be habited as in life, for the disembodied soul appears in the form its imagination creates.

But a conclusive objection to the telepathic theory occurs to me in this, that although I can conceive of a mental impression being transmitted from a distance, and, indeed, I am satisfied that such impressions are sometimes so transmitted, yet such transmissions or messages, although they might present hallucinations to the recipients, could not open doors or move furniture, or follow with the eyes and the body the movements of the recipients. The telepathic message would carry the exact form it assumed in the brain of the agent as he sent it, but could not possibly modify its form in accordance with the changing conditions of the recipient.

Further, although it is conceivable that a telepathic message from a deceased friend might travel from India to, say, 40, Castle-street, Edinburgh, in obedience to a promise given to a friend to manifest himself at death, that telepathic message, not finding, say, Harry Brougham in his usual habitat, could not, as a message, by any conceivable method, go travelling over Europe, and find its friend in a hot bath in Sweden, according to the interesting narrative as recorded by Lord Brougham himself, and quoted in these volumes.

But many of the phantasms described in these volumes seem to have been those not of the living but of the dead, and surely a dead brain could not transmit a telepathic impression. The editors see a difficulty in regard to these cases, but attempt to escape from it by stating that the exact hour of death is uncertain, and, indeed, that an intelligent action may sometimes proceed from a body apparently dead.

Those who believe in the soul and in entrancement will admit this, but the editors are not alluding to trance, but to telepathic action, and we can only reply that when the brain is apparently dead, it is impossible to conceive of it acting with such telepathic energy as to transmit its force to a distance of thousands of miles.

Those who have watched the process of dying find that the brain gradually becomes more and more feeble, and that coma, in the majority of cases, sets in, when all mental consciousness disappears, and it is not conceivable that the brain in this condition could so act as to transmit its energy telepathically to a distance. Moreover, in many of the cases recorded in these volumes the supposed agent has been dead for hours before the "recipient" receives the impression of a visible presence, and the editors attempt to get over this difficulty by inventing the theory that impressions sent may be *deferred* until the brain or mind of the recipient is so attuned, as it were, as to be capable of receiving the message. But this is a theory without one atom of evidence, and is, moreover, contrary to all analogy,

and it might with equal truth be said, that as one stringed instrument cannot respond to another stringed instrument unless both are tuned to the same pitch, therefore, when the second instrument was tuned to the same pitch with the first, the note struck on the first instrument, an hour previously, would then resound on the second instrument; an achievement truly worthy of Baron Munchausen!

But the editors themselves would appear not quite satisfied with their own telepathic theory, and accordingly Mr. Myers has a long chapter on a theory of "Psychical Interaction." This is a title which seems to me to be an excellent one, and the theory Mr. Myers propounds appears to me in part to be much nearer the truth than the theory implied by the term telepathy; to be, in short, metaphysically sometimes very near the truth, the cases Mr. Myers brings forward in illustrating his theory being, to my mind, certainly beyond any telepathic explanation.

I have said that the editors have invented in telepathy a key by which they profess to be able to open all mystical locks; but as they record many cases to which the key will not apply, they then, with a calm self-satisfaction which is wonderful, proceed, not to alter their key, but to break down the wards of the refractory locks. This is their invariable habit, and one they practice in commenting on a case furnished by myself (Vol. II., p. 626), the essential factors of which case are, that the double of an intimate friend of my own entered her mother's kitchen, the door of which was by the *two* servants seen to open, and the young mistress to enter with *green* kid gloves in her hands. But as the telepathic theory cannot open doors or apparently materialise green kid gloves, at variance with the habits of the agent, who habitually wore black kid gloves, the editors calmly imply that the opening of the door was an hallucination, and the *green* kid gloves an after-thought. But surely this method of treating cases is quite unwarrantable, and the evidence for the opening of the door, and the green kid gloves, is identical in quality with the evidence for the case itself.

Thus it is shown that the telepathic theory cannot explain the opening of doors by ghostly visitors, and if not, then the conclusion is that the theory is, at least so far, insufficient.

Probably about eighty out of a hundred persons who have tested slate-writing are perfectly convinced of its reality, and if pencils can be moved to write long messages inside closed spaces to which at the moment human access is impossible, there exists no difficulty in believing that the handles of doors also can be moved, and the doors opened "by psychic force," and as such acts amount to refutations of the telepathic theory, we are not surprised when we find its advocates intolerant in their rejection of the evidences for slate-writing.

I have thus attempted to show that the telepathic theory affords no interpretation to the immense collection of facts in these volumes. Those who furnished the facts appear nearly all to have given them in the belief that the "phantasms" were revelations of soul to soul, or spirit to spirit, and I have found nothing in these volumes to shake my conviction, that ghosts are objective realities, and that spirit is the ultimate force in the universe, and the only conceivable substance of all appearances in matter.

GEORGE WYLD, M.D.

Psychography.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—For the present I must content myself with a very few words on Mr. Myers' remarks in "LIGHT" March 12th, on a slate message received at Mr. Eglinton's, and recorded by me in "LIGHT," October 16th, 1886. I hope, if strength allows, to say more on the subject of psychography at some future time.

If I had supposed that this experience of slate-writing could have been thought to furnish an instance of a "self-proving message," or that I held it to be such, my paper would not have appeared unaccompanied by any comment on the reference to a story which has been printed in two places. I was perfectly aware of the suspicion to which this reference would give rise, and spoke of it to Mr. Eglinton, who, however, begged me to give my account without suppression or addition. He had asked for the evidence, he said, to prove the genuineness of the writing without material hands, on a locked or covered slate. When the possibility of this is acknowledged, every separate instance may be examined on its own merits, and the conditions which render them trustworthy or the reverse will be ascertained. My own experience is not one of the most convincing.

It can hardly be necessary for me to say, though Mr. Myers seems doubtful of the fact, that the two bits of slip-slop which he quotes are *not* "considered [by me] characteristic of the style" of the supposed writer, with whose manner of writing I am not unfamiliar. I may add too, that had the slate communication impressed me either by language or substance as being characteristic, it would not have appeared as a specimen of psychography in a printed collection.

30, Cheyne-row, S.W.

S. E. DE MORGAN.

Facts.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I think that possibly a few of my experiences in the investigation of Spiritualism may aid those who are interested in the subject; so I venture to ask the space for a few more "facts" in your valuable paper. It would tire the reader to learn how, little by little, my former beliefs and ideas were knocked down, one by one, till I arrived at last at the point when I was compelled to acknowledge myself a Spiritualist. The very first "facts" in this long chain were my own dreams, which came true. This led me to the Society for Psychical Research; but after my first sitting with Mr. Eglinton I thought I would try for myself, and I sat regularly with a friend. I found, by chance, servants to be especially good, and shall give my experiences in *that* line, in the hope that they may encourage others to start in the same direction.

On one occasion my little girl had toothache, and thinking I could give her relief, I began to make passes down her face. In a few moments my boy shouted, "Look at A." (servant No 1). I looked, and found her fast asleep. Mesmerising my child had sent her off. I was most uneasy, but soon brought her round and, with the aid of a friend, had some very interesting experiments. The girl in no way objected, and was an excellent subject. A member of the Society for Psychical Research desired to see me mesmerise her, and as soon as she heard this she cried and objected. I had ignominiously to write and say that she *refused*. Eventually she became "homesick" and, much to the disgust of her mother, left my service. She was a good, clever girl, and I was sorry to lose her.

No. 2 (M.) was a Norwegian—a very high-principled, good woman, aged twenty-three. She knew nothing of Spiritualism, and I sat with her *alone* for some months, got good raps, and much *unreliable* information, and bad spelling. On one occasion I thought she cheated, so the next day I bandaged her eyes, traced with pencil all round her widely-outspread hands on a wooden table, in order to detect any movement of the hands, and tried in every way I could think of to catch her, but failed—the knocks being given where asked, and *away* from the medium. I therefore concluded that I had misjudged her the eve before. We *never* sat other than in *full* light. The girl could speak no English, and never knew what I was saying to the invisibles. She became ill, and returned to Norway. She was an excellent servant, and good, in its highest and broadest sense.

No. 3 (F.) was a girl I disliked in all respects; a dirty, story-telling inferior creature. With her I tried nothing, but soon found she had the power of reading my thoughts, so I often gave (after I discovered the fact) mental directions, and in a minute or two her dirty, untidy head would appear with a "Please 'um, did you say I was to do so-and-so?" On one occasion she read my thoughts so well that I found her packing her box to leave at once. Fortunately, for me, she framed my ideas in such vulgar language that I could assure her with perfect truth that *such words had never passed my lips*. She left for a holiday, and did not return, and I sent her belongings off the next day, telling her by letter "as she had absented herself she could remain away."

No. 4 (K.) a German, could speak no English. I got her direct from Germany. Her one great fault was untruthfulness. Hearing of the wonders to be worked by mesmerism I tried her, and found she was a *perfect* subject. I made some exceedingly interesting experiments, and had got her to the stage which I suppose leads to clairvoyance, when the master of her sister heard of it and requested me to send her back to Germany or to him, as her mother wished it. The girl told me they thought I was one with Satan.

I may state that when she was entranced I drew horrible pictures of my detestation of lies, with the good result that she decidedly improved in this direction while with me.

I was now in despair about a servant, and one evening, when alone, I was holding a pen, as I often do, to *try and get auto-*

matic writing, and after many nonsensical sentences the following was written, "Get a girl from Edin." I was astonished, but wrote to my sisters who reside in Edinburgh, stated my requirements and wages, and received the reply that "they could not find what I wanted." I then wrote to Germany and dismissed the idea of Scotland. Again my hand wrote "Get a girl from Edin." I wrote and asked my sisters to try once more, and to advertise. They did so, and I think sixteen replies were obtained. One was selected (M.), No. 5, as most suitable, and she came in due course. I decided, as I had lost my last servant through experimenting, that this one should be left entirely alone, and so she was; not one word did I ever speak to her upon the subject. ticular reason, but said she was "dull," and "wanted to get back. About a month before Christmas she gave notice; she gave no part to her only sister in Scotland." I could say nothing, so accepted it. About a week after this I thought that, as she was leaving anyhow, I would see if she had any "power." When I asked her to sit, she asked, "What for?" I said, "To see if we can get any *electricity* out of this wooden table." She complied, with the astonishing and violent results mentioned in my last letter. She was more surprised than I was. I have many friends who can testify to all these cases, and it is to me striking that five servants in succession should have been to some extent interesting. I hope others may be tempted to try and investigate for themselves as I have done.—Trusting this bare outline of "facts" is not too lengthy, I am, sir, your obedient servant,
H. K. BRIETZCKE.

Percy Lefroy Mapleton.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I think there is some reason to believe that Percy Lefroy Mapleton, alluded to by "J. H. M." in your number for March 12th, was a clairaudient medium. He rushed from his residence to the station like a madman, probably under influence; went on the platform, saw the old gentleman in a first-class carriage alone, and had time to take a first-class ticket and enter the carriage with his victim. In that carriage, he all along declared, there were three persons; the guard and the porters, said there were only two! But Lefroy, from his point of view, might be right; he may have been attended by a being out of the flesh, but still potent as an adviser to himself, and one who urged him to the deed throughout. The newspapers said that he told some of his friends, before his execution, that when he was in the carriage he repented, and would not have attacked the old man, but the spirit said to him, "Where are you to get the money to go home with?" He had spent all he had, or nearly all, in purchasing his ticket; that consideration, so put, caused him to change his mind, and the battle began.

Guiteau, who murdered President Garfield, declared the deed to have been done through inspiration. When asked what he meant, he answered: "I understand inspiration to exist in a case where a man's mind was taken possession of by a superior power, and he acted outside himself."

T. W.

Have Animals Souls?

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—In the interesting correspondence that has been going on in "LIGHT" as to whether or not "animals have souls," or a future life, the letter that interested me most was that of your correspondent "E. M.," who chiefly dwells upon the mercy and "humanity" with which we should treat them in this their present life. Many of us do, indeed, hope for them some better and happier state of existence than can ever be possible for them here, where those upon whom they are so dependent are too often so cruel.

"Shall man the oppressor hope Heaven to win,
And they the oppressed hope not?"

But our plain and simple duty in regard to them is to do all in our power to help them *now*; and as I read your correspondent's remarks about the mistaken but too prevalent idea, that "humanity, meaning men and women, can be benefited by merciless inhumanity to poor dumb, helpless animals," I thought how in our selfishness we had narrowed the very meaning of the word humanity, and opening my dictionary read of it these wider and truer definitions: "The kind feelings, disposition and sympathies of man by which he is distinguished from the lower order of animals"; "kindness and benevolence—especially a disposition to relieve distress and to treat with tenderness those who are helpless and dependent";

"opposed to cruelty"; "a disposition to treat the lower orders of animals with tenderness and to give them no unnecessary pain!"

Now how shall we reconcile these definitions of this really beautiful old word, with the teaching of those who hold that the most merciless tortures may be inflicted upon "the lower animals" in the service of "humanity?"

Edgbaston.

S. W.

Spiritualism and Conjuring.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—I should like to say a few words concerning Mr. Hodgson's attack on Spiritualism at Whitechapel. He seems to attribute most of the physical phenomena to trickery. I should have thought that the day had gone by for such an assumption to be credited by any experienced investigator, considering the immense evidence obtainable of the genuine character of the phenomena. We all know that there have been trickery and delusion; but what of the phenomena obtained in thousands of homes where no cause for trickery exists? With all due respect for Mr. Hodgson allow me to say that this method of setting out with the belief that the phenomena are mere conjuring and then looking for the smallest loophole in the evidence, and following on by saying that this *may* be trickery, &c., and attempting to build on this "may" an edifice of certainty, is not the way to get at truth. Are the experiences of so many honest and impartial and educated people to go for nothing? Those who have patiently built up their belief on well-proven facts are not to have the results of their labours thrown aside as worthless by mere assumptions and crude theories.

A. F. TINDALL, A. Mus. T.C.L.

The City's Doom.

To the Editor of "LIGHT."

SIR,—Can any of your readers oblige me with any correct report of the "City's Doom," as prophesied so often by Herbert P. Freund on the steps of St. Paul's. I see that in a late paper he is again reported as having tried to deliver his message, and being again sent to prison. Has he been seen or examined by any Spiritualist competent to form a judgment? For I strongly suspect that he is simply a medium who has a special mission from the spirit-world, and now his more decided utterance, that "London shall be destroyed by fire within this year," coincides with some remarkable utterances to the same purport in a Spiritual paper called the *Star and Cradle*. It is there stated that *seven weeks only are given as a respite, and that then by earthquake and fire the great city shall be destroyed*.

Now, it will interest your readers to know that I am personally acquainted with, and have spent some time under the roof of those from whom these visions and utterances emanate, and I and others competent to judge find them to be simple earnest people of unimpeachable character, and their self-denial of even necessities of life in order to publish what their spiritual guides commission them is well known to me. I may add that the Duality in Unity in the Deity has been prominent among their teachings, and the rising up of a universal king, *now among us*, the son of the Divine Mother.

An account of Mr. Freund's message of the "City's Doom" might be acceptable to your readers as well as myself.

A. WATCHER.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MRS. E. W. W. (Grahamstown).—Subscription for 1887 safely to hand. Thanks.

SUBSCRIBERS RESIDENT ON THE CONTINENT will greatly oblige if, when they send remittances through the Post-office, they will kindly forward to us, at the same time, a notice that they have done so. We frequently receive "orders" through the Post-office without any intimation as to whom they come from, and do not know, therefore, to whose account to credit them.

THERE are two kinds of men. One of these through *aptitude* will receive the illuminations of Divinity, through *inaptitude* will subject himself to the power of demons.—PLATO.

WITHOUT organisation, how produce a permanent effect upon the world? In our humble opinion, since the organisations commenced by the leading Spiritualists in the B.N.A.S. and the Alliance, and since the advent of their organ "LIGHT," more has been done to affect public opinion than anything else. The problem is to combine organisation with individual liberty, and it is not insoluble.—*Spiritual Reformer*.

TESTIMONY TO PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The following is a list of eminent persons who, after personal investigation, have satisfied themselves of the reality of some of the phenomena generally known as Psychical or Spiritualistic.

N.B.—An asterisk is prefixed to those who have exchanged belief for knowledge.

SCIENCE.—The Earl of Crawford and Balcarres, F.R.S., President R.A.S.; W. Crookes, Fellow and Gold Medallist of the Royal Society; C. Varley, F.R.S., C.E.; A. R. Wallace, the eminent Naturalist; W. F. Barrett, F.R.S.E., Professor of Physics in the Royal College of Science, Dublin; Dr. Lockhart Robertson; *Dr. J. Elliotson, F.R.S., some time President of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London; *Professor de Morgan, sometime President of the Mathematical Society of London; *Dr. Wm. Gregory, F.R.S.E., sometime Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh; *Dr. Ashburner *Mr. Rutter; *Dr. Herbert Mayo, F.R.S., &c., &c.

*Professor F. Zöllner, of Leipzig, author of *Transcendental Physics*, &c.; Professors G. T. Fechner, Scheibner, and J. H. Fichte, of Leipzig; Professor W. E. Weber, of Göttingen; Professor Hoffman, of Würzburg; *Professor Perty, of Berne; Professors Wagner and *Butlerof, of Petersburg; *Professors Hare and Mapes, of U.S.A.; Dr. Robert Friesse, of Breslau; M. Camille Flammarion, Astronomer, &c., &c.

LITERATURE.—The Earl of Dunraven; T. A. Trollope; S. C. Hall; Gerald Massey; Sir R. Burton; *Professor Cassal, LL.D.; *Lord Brougham; *Lord Lytton; *Lord Lyndhurst; *Archbishop Whately; *Dr. R. Chambers, F.R.S.E.; *W. M. Thackeray; *Nassau Senior; *George Thompson; *W. Howitt; *Serjeant Cox; *Mrs. Browning; Hon. Roden Noel, &c., &c.

Bishop Clarke, Rhode Island, U.S.A.; Darius Lyman, U.S.A.; Professor W. Denton; Professor Alex. Wilder; Professor Hiram Corson; Professor George Bush; and twenty-four Judges and ex-Judges of the U.S. Courts; *Victor Hugo; Baron and Baroness Von Vay; *W. Lloyd Garrison, U.S.A.; *Hon. R. Dale Owen, U.S.A.; *Hon. J. W. Edmonds, U.S.A.; *Epes Sargent; *Baron du Potet; *Count A. de Gasparin; *Baron L. de Guldenstübbe, &c., &c.

SOCIAL POSITION.—H. I. H. Nicholas, Duke of Leuchtenberg; H. S. H. the Prince of Solms; H. S. H. Prince Albrecht of Solms; *H. S. H. Prince Emile of Sayn Wittgenstein; Hon. Alexander Aksakof, Imperial Councillor of Russia; the Countess of Caithness and Duchesse de Pomar; the Hon. J. L. O'Sullivan, sometime Minister of U.S.A. at the Court of Lisbon; M. Favre-Clavairoz, late Consul-General of France at Trieste; the late Emperors of *Russia and *France; Presidents *Thiers and *Lincoln, &c., &c.

WHAT IS SAID OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

J. H. FICHTE, THE GERMAN PHILOSOPHER AND AUTHOR.—“Notwithstanding my age (83) and my exemption from the controversies of the day, I feel it my duty to bear testimony to the great fact of Spiritualism. No one should keep silent.”

PROFESSOR DE MORGAN, PRESIDENT OF THE MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—“I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things called spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me.”

DR. ROBERT CHAMBERS.—“I have for many years known that these phenomena are real, as distinguished from impostures; and it is not of yesterday that I concluded they were calculated to explain much that has been doubtful in the past; and when fully accepted, revolutionise the whole frame of human opinion on many important matters.”—*Extract from a Letter to A. Russell Wallace.*

PROFESSOR HARE, EMERITUS PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.—“Far from abating my confidence in the inferences respecting the agencies of the spirits of deceased mortals, in the manifestations of which I have given an account in my work, *I have*, within the last nine months” (this was written in 1858), “had more striking evidences of that agency than those given in the work in question.”

PROFESSOR CHALLIS, THE LATE PLUMERIAN PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY AT CAMBRIDGE.—“I have been unable to resist the large amount of testimony to such facts, which has come from many independent sources, and from a vast number of witnesses. . . . In short, the testimony has been so abundant and consentaneous, that either the facts must be admitted to be such as are reported, or the possibility of certifying facts by human testimony must be given up.”—*Clerical Journal*, June, 1862.

PROFESSORS TORNEBOM AND EDLAND, THE SWEDISH PHYSICISTS.—“Only those deny the reality of spirit phenomena who have never examined them, but profound study alone can explain them. We do not know where we may be led by the discovery of the cause of these, as it seems, trivial occurrences, or to what new spheres of Nature's kingdom they may open the way; but that they will bring forward important results is already made clear to us by the revelations of natural history in all ages.”—*Aftonblad* (Stockholm), October 30th, 1879.

PROFESSOR GREGORY, F.R.S.E.—“The essential question is this, What are the proofs of the agency of departed spirits? Although I cannot say that I yet feel the sure and firm conviction on this point which I feel on some others, I am bound to say that the higher phenomena, recorded by so many truthful and honourable men, appear to me to render the spiritual hypothesis almost certain. I believe that if I could myself see the higher phenomena alluded to I should be satisfied, as are all those who have had the best means of judging the truth of the spiritual theory.”

LORD BROUGHAM.—“There is but one question I would ask the author, Is the Spiritualism of this work foreign to our materialistic, manufacturing age? No; for amidst the varieties of mind which divers circumstances produce are found those who cultivate man's highest faculties; to these the author addresses himself. But even in the most cloudless skies of scepticism I see a rain-cloud, if it be no bigger than a man's hand; it is modern Spiritualism.”—*Preface by Lord Brougham to “The Book of Nature.”* By C. O. Groom Napier, F.C.S.

THE LONDON DIALECTICAL COMMITTEE reported: “1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance. 2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical

contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person. 3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and, by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.”

CROMWELL F. VARLEY, F.R.S.—“Twenty-five years ago I was a hard-headed unbeliever. . . . Spiritual phenomena, however, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, were soon after developed in my own family. . . . This led me to inquire and to try numerous experiments in such a way as to preclude, as much as circumstances would permit, the possibility of trickery and self-deception.” . . . He then details various phases of the phenomena which had come within the range of his personal experience, and continues: “Other and numerous phenomena have occurred, proving the existence (a) of forces unknown to science; (b) the power of instantly reading my thoughts; (c) the presence of some intelligence or intelligences controlling those powers. . . . That the phenomena occur there is overwhelming evidence, and it is too late to deny their existence.”

CAMILLE FLAMMARION, THE FRENCH ASTRONOMER, AND MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE FRANCAISE.—“I do not hesitate to affirm my conviction, based on personal examination of the subject, that any scientific man who declares the phenomena denominated ‘magnetic,’ ‘somnambule,’ ‘mediumic,’ and others not yet explained by science to be ‘impossible,’ is one who speaks without knowing what he is talking about; and also any man accustomed, by his professional avocations, to scientific observation—provided that his mind be not biased by pre-conceived opinions, nor his mental vision blinded by that opposite kind of illusion, unhappily too common in the learned world, which consists in imagining that the laws of Nature are already known to us, and that everything which appears to overstep the limit of our present formulas is impossible—may acquire a radical and absolute certainty of the reality of the facts alluded to.”

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